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**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF
DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY
HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION
AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS**

Sub-Committee of Experts on the
Transport of Dangerous Goods

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

LISTING, CLASSIFICATION AND PACKING

Infectious substances: Classification of “Medical or Clinical Wastes”

Transmitted by the expert from Germany

Background

1. According to paragraph 2.6.3.1.6 of the Model Regulations, medical wastes are defined as wastes derived from the medical treatment of humans or animals or from bio-research. Most of the medical and clinical wastes arise from the treatment of humans, including associated diagnostic examinations in hospitals, medical practices and other medical institutions.
2. Such wastes cannot be regarded as a single well-defined infectious substance but are, as a rule, an accumulation of wastes derived from the medical treatment of numerous patients. Therefore, they are quite variable and inhomogeneous in nature. This applies to both the type of materials to be disposed of and possible contamination with various pathogens (pathogen micro-organisms). It can be assumed that wastes derived from the medical treatment and care of a larger number of various patients (e.g. in hospitals) also contain pathogens to a certain, variable extent.

3. These special circumstances make the classification of such wastes as dangerous goods for carriage to the waste disposal site more difficult. Moreover, the legal relationships between the dangerous goods regulations and waste law also play a role.

4. In Europe, a uniform waste law applies. An important basis for the assignment of medical wastes is the European Waste Catalogue (EWC), a reference nomenclature laying down a common terminology for the entire European Community.

5. Medical wastes are assigned to chapter 18 of the EWC and categorized according to the groups and types of waste set out in the annex.

6. The RID/ADR/ADN Joint Meeting has recently adopted an amendment to RID/ADR/ADN, which is to enter into force on 1 January 2007, according to which the relevant EWC codes are taken into account in sub-sections 2.2.62.1.11.1 and 2.2.62.1.11.2 for the assignment to UN number 3291 so that these codes are used for the assignment of the wastes in Europe. The clearer differentiation of medical wastes in the EWC has thus been considered an advantage.

7. However, the waste catalogues at international level (Basel Convention, OECD) and presumably those used in various States outside the European Union have not been harmonized. Therefore, a general note should be added to section 2.6.3.5 stating that international, regional or national waste catalogues, which clarify these regulations and facilitate their application in practice, may in addition be used for the more specific assignment of medical wastes to UN number 3291.

Proposal

Add the following sentence at the end of sub-section 2.6.3.5.2 before the note:

“For the assignment, international, regional or national waste catalogues may be taken into account.”

Annex**Excerpt from chapter 18 of EWC**

18	WASTES FROM HUMAN OR ANIMAL HEALTH CARE AND/OR RELATED RESEARCH (except kitchen and restaurant wastes not arising from immediate health care)
18 01	wastes from natal care, diagnosis, treatment or prevention of disease in humans
18 01 01	sharps (except 18 01 03)
18 01 02	body parts and organs including blood bags and blood preserves (except 18 01 03)
18 01 03*	wastes whose collection and disposal is subject to special requirements in order to prevent infection
18 01 04	wastes whose collection and disposal is not subject to special requirements in order to prevent infection (for example dressings, plaster casts, linen, disposable clothing, diapers)
18 01 06*	chemicals consisting of or containing dangerous substances
18 01 07	chemicals other than those mentioned in 18 01 06
18 01 08*	cytotoxic and cytostatic medicines
18 01 09	medicines other than those mentioned in 18 01 08
18 01 10*	amalgam waste from dental care
18 02	wastes from research, diagnosis, treatment or prevention of disease involving animals
18 02 01	sharps (except 18 02 02)
18 02 02*	wastes whose collection and disposal is subject to special requirements in order to prevent infection
18 02 03	wastes whose collection and disposal is not subject to special requirements in order to prevent infection
18 02 05*	chemicals consisting of or containing dangerous substances
18 02 06	chemicals other than those mentioned in 18 02 05
18 02 07*	cytotoxic and cytostatic medicines
18 02 08	medicines other than those mentioned in 18 02 07